

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please delete paragraphs [0021] and [0022] and replace them with the following amended paragraphs:

[0021] A gap 120 is partially defined between venturi outer surface 94 and secondary swirler inner wall 60. In the exemplary embodiment, gap 120 extends from venturi and secondary swirler flange portions 36 and 34, respectively, towards venturi downstream end 98 where venturi 36 and secondary swirler 34 are fixedly coupled together. ~~Gap~~ In one embodiment, gap 120 creates a dead air cavity between venturi 36 and secondary swirler flow passage 64, which facilitates insulating venturi 36 from high temperatures associated with flow passage 64. Accordingly, gap 120 also facilitates reducing a rate of “explosive boiling” on venturi outer surface 94, thereby minimizing the need for a ceramic coating on venturi outer surface. However, in an alternative embodiment, venturi outer surface 94 is coated with a ceramic coating. In another alternative embodiment, venturi inner and/or outer surface 92 and/or 94 is coated with a thermal barrier coating to facilitate insulating venturi 36 from high temperatures.

[0022] In ~~the exemplary another~~ embodiment, a plurality of openings 122 extend through secondary swirler inner wall 60 to couple flow passage 64 and gap 120 in flow communication. Openings 122 enable bleed air flowing through passage 64 to enter gap 120 to facilitate providing a purge flow through gap 120. The purge flow facilitates preventing the ingestion of fuel, water and air into gap 120. In an alternative embodiment, no openings are provided between flow passage 64 and gap 120.